

Cranberry Pear Braid

Makes three small loaves

1 pound frozen bread dough
2 tablespoons butter, softened
½ cup jellied cranberry sauce
15-ounce can pears, well-drained and sliced (1 cup)
¼ cup slivered almonds
3 tablespoons sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
1 egg white, beaten (reserved for glossy top)

Glaze
1 cup powdered sugar
1 teaspoon butter, softened
2 tablespoons water
¼ teaspoon almond extract

Thaw dough according to package directions; bring to room temperature. Roll dough into 10 x 21-inch rectangle. Divide dough into three 10 x 7-inch portions. Spread 2 teaspoons butter over each. Spread one third of cranberry sauce down center third of each portion. Slice pears and arrange over cranberry sauce. Sprinkle almonds over pears. Mix the sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over almonds.

With a knife, cut dough horizontally from edge of filling to edge of dough, about 1 inch wide on both sides of filling. Alternately fold strips over filling at an angle, sealing ends of braid over filling. Gently place braids on baking sheet. Brush with egg white for glossy top.

Bake in preheated 350-degree oven 25 to 30 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to cooling rack. Cool slightly before glazing.

Glaze: Mix sugar, butter, water and extract. Drizzle over braids.

Nutrition Analysis: *With 6 slices per loaf, each slice provides approximately: 146 calories, 3 g protein, 26 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber, 4 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 4 mg cholesterol, 1 mcg folate, 1 mg iron, 161 mg sodium*

Banana Chocolate Chip Cookies

Makes 36 cookies

½ cup butter
1 cup lightly packed brown sugar
1 egg
1 cup mashed ripe bananas
½ teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons baking powder
2¼ cups flour
1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
1 cup chocolate chips

In medium bowl with electric mixer, cream together butter and brown sugar. Add egg and beat. Add mashed bananas and mix. Stir together salt, soda, baking powder and flour. Add to banana mixture and beat until combined. Mix in vanilla and chocolate chips. Dough will be soft.

Place about 1½ tablespoons of dough for each cookie on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake in preheated 375-degree oven about ten minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to cooling rack.

Nutrition Analysis: *Each cookie provides approximately: 133 calories, 2 g protein, 22 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber, 4 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 13 mg cholesterol, 14 mcg folate, 1 mg iron, 125 mg sodium.*